

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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SENATE BILL 588

Short Title: Pregnant Workers Protection Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Murdock and Chitlik (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

March 26, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO PROTECT PREGNANT WOMEN FROM DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES.
The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1.(a) G.S. 95-151 reads as rewritten:

"§ 95-151. Discrimination.

No employer, employee, or any other person related to the administration of this Article shall be discriminated against in any work, procedure, or employment by reason of sex, race, pregnancy, ethnic origin, or by reason of religious affiliation."

SECTION 1.(b) G.S. 126-34.02(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) The following issues may be heard as contested cases after completion of the agency grievance procedure and the Office of State Human Resources review:

(1) Discrimination or harassment. – An applicant for State employment, a State employee, or former State employee may allege discrimination or harassment based on race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, pregnancy, genetic information, or political affiliation if the employee believes that he or she has been discriminated against in his or her application for employment or in the terms and conditions of the employee's employment, or in the termination of his or her employment.

(2) Retaliation. – An applicant for State employment, a State employee, or former State employee may allege retaliation for protesting discrimination based on race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, pregnancy, political affiliation, or genetic information if the employee believes that he or she has been retaliated against in his or her application for employment or in the terms and conditions of the employee's employment, or in the termination of the employee's employment.

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SECTION 2.(a) G.S. 168A-3 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(7b) Pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions. – Pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, including lactation. Pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions shall be considered a physical impairment for the purposes of this Chapter when they substantially limit one or more major life activities."

SECTION 2.(b) G.S. 168A-5 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(a1) Pregnancy accommodations. – It is a discriminatory practice if an employer fails to provide reasonable accommodations for any limitation of an employee related to pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition, unless the employer can demonstrate that providing



such accommodations would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the business of the employer. Reasonable accommodations may include, but are not limited to any one or more of the following:

- (1) More frequent or longer bathroom breaks.
- (2) Breaks for increased hydration.
- (3) Breaks for periodic rest.
- (4) Assistance with heavy manual labor.
- (5) Job restructuring.
- (6) Modified work schedules.
- (7) Temporary transfer to a less strenuous or hazardous position.
- (8) Providing a vacant position to an employee who cannot perform the essential functions of her job due to pregnancy or a pregnancy-related condition.
- (9) Providing seating.
- (10) Allowing the employee to maintain a healthy weight.
- (11) Providing break time and appropriate facilities for expressing breast milk."

SECTION 3. G.S. 41A-3(3a) reads as rewritten:

"(3a) 'Handicapping condition' means (i) a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of a person's major life activities, (ii) a record of having such an impairment, or (iii) being regarded as having such an impairment. Handicapping condition does not include current, illegal use of or addiction to a controlled substance as defined in 21 U.S.C. § 802, the Controlled Substances Act. Handicapping condition includes pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions as defined in G.S. 168A-3. The protections against discrimination on the basis of handicapping condition shall apply to a buyer or renter of a dwelling, a person residing in or intending to reside in the dwelling after it is sold, rented, or made available, or any person associated with the buyer or renter."

SECTION 4. This act becomes effective July 1, 2026, and applies to acts and omission occurring on or after that date.